



Federal Emergency Management Agency

NEWS

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SUBSTANTIAL NEW RESOURCES COMMITTED TO EXPEDITE SEARCH AND COLLECTION EFFORT FOR *COLUMBIA* MATERIAL

New Guidelines Allow Trained First Responders to Assist with Collection Effort

LUFKIN, TX – Federal and state officials today released guidelines for local government and other agency officials to allow trained first responders to assist with picking up non-hazardous *Columbia* shuttle material.

The guidelines were provided to local officials in impacted areas in a conference call organized by the Texas Department of Public Safety Tuesday morning. Among those authorized to now pick up non-hazardous parts of *Columbia* are: local, state and federal law enforcement agents; fire, medical or emergency services personnel; U.S. Forest Service or Texas Forest Service personnel; and agents of the Federal Emergency Management (FEMA); NASA and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

Importantly, these guidelines do not authorize private citizens to pick up shuttle material.

“While there remain hazardous pieces of *Columbia* material that only qualified teams should handle, a large portion is non-hazardous. Local officials have assisted greatly in the effort to identify and guard the materials” said NASA official Dwayne Brown.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has designated the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as the lead agency for the collection and removal of hazardous Space Shuttle *Columbia* material.

The EPA has more than 60 teams of highly trained response experts available to collect and remove potentially hazardous material that the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) has identified in the area.

These EPA teams have removed thousands of items from hundreds of locations across 23 counties during the past several days, and are continuing to respond to calls for hazardous materials handling.

The EPA urged local authorities to use caution when determining if material is hazardous. The EPA continues to remind the public to contact local authorities to assess and remove material.

-- Attached is a FACT SHEET explaining the new guidelines. --

***COLUMBIA* MATERIAL COLLECTION GUIDELINES: FACT SHEET**

The following guidelines are designed to assist public service personnel to determine when and how to collect and document space shuttle material. If the material is less than 18 inches in length and does not appear to be hazardous, then it may be collected under the following guidelines:

PRIVATE CITIZENS ARE NOT AUTHORIZED TO COLLECT MATERIAL

The following trained personnel are authorized to collect non-hazardous materials:

Local, State or Federal Law Enforcement Personnel
Fire, Medical, or Emergency Services Personnel
U.S. Forest Service or Texas Forest Service
Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)

Only non-hazardous material may be collected under these guidelines. If the material includes any of the following, officials should contact 936-699-1032 or 936-699-1034 to report what they have found so that specially trained personnel can be deployed:

Stored Energy:	High Pressure Tanks and Cylinders. Landing gear and tires.
Monomethyl Hydrazine:	Clear liquid stored in tanks, strong fishy odor.
Nitrogen Tetroxide:	Greenish liquid or brownish vapor, stored in tanks, bleach-like odor.
Ammonia:	Clear liquid, stored in tanks, very strong ammonia smell.
Pyrotechnic Devices:	Landing gear, window frames, crew seats, hatches and antennae.
Biological Material:	Any biological material, including human or animal remains.

The following procedure should be followed by authorized, trained personnel if the identified material is non-hazardous:

- Photograph items before they are moved.
- Carefully document the location of the items (to include GPS data if available).
- Attach a tag to the item with the location the item was found and the name and phone number of the individual collecting the item. Include any information you think may be relevant to the investigation. Documentation for large items may be recorded with permanent marker directly on the hardware.
- Wear gloves (preferably not cloth) when handling items and do not open, adjust or move any switches, components or boxes.
- If possible, seal the item in a plastic bag.
- Transport the item to your local command post.

If an item is marked SECRET, CONFIDENTIAL, or SSOR do not leave this item unattended before handover to NASA personnel.

With any questions or for more information, please contact DPS at the Lufkin Emergency Operation Center, 936-699-1077.

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